

BHEW Bulletin

September 2013

National Recovery Month



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Behavioral Health
Epidemiology Workgroup

- ⊕ September is National Recovery Month. Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential. The four major dimensions that support a life in recovery are health, home, purpose, and community.
- ⊕ Recovery Month spreads the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, that prevention works, treatment is effective and people can and do recover. More details can be found at SAMHSA's website recoverymonth.gov.
- ⊕ 10% of American adults, ages 18 and older, consider themselves to be in recovery from drug or alcohol abuse problems.¹ When looking at recovery for drug or alcohol abuse:
 - ⊕ More males say they are in recovery than females (12% vs. 7%).
 - ⊕ More adults ages 35-44 report being in recovery, compared to younger adults (18-34) and adults who are 55 years of age or older.
 - ⊕ The Midwest has the highest prevalence of adults (14%) who say they are in recovery. This compares to 7% in the South, 11% in the West and 9% in the Northeast.
- ⊕ The majority of people who achieved sustained recovery from drug or alcohol abuse, did so after participating in treatment— marijuana (43%), cocaine (61%), alcohol (81%), and heroin (92%). Others recover without the aid of treatment. Participation in mutual aid groups (i.e. 12-step programs, spirituality groups and social and community support) has also been shown to be effective in supporting recovery.²
- ⊕ Approximately 6% of Americans live with a serious mental illness. However, the best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective; between 70% - 90% of individuals have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and supports.³
- ⊕ Early identification and treatment of mental illness is of vital importance. By ensuring access to the treatment and recovery supports that are proven effective, recovery is accelerated and the further harm related to the course of illness is minimized. A key concept is to develop expertise in developing strategies to manage the illness process.³

¹ <http://www.drugfree.org/newsroom/survey-ten-percent-of-american-adults-report-being-in-recovery-from-substance-abuse-or-addiction>

² http://partnersforrecovery.samhsa.gov/docs/Guiding_Principles_Whitepaper.pdf

³ http://www.nami.org/template.cfm?section=about_mental_illness